

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUNICH 1941

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, GW  
SUBJECT: STRAUSS, KOHL AND OPPOSITION STRATEGY ON EVE OF  
FIRST MTG OF CDU/CSU STRATEGY COMMISSION

REF: BONN 10969

1. INTRO AND SUMMARY. CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS APPARENTLY BELIEVES THIS IS AUSPICIOUS MOMENT FOR HIM TO MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO PRESSURE OPPOSITION LEADER HELMUT KOHL INTO ADOPTING A POLITICAL STRATEGY WHICH CORRESPONDS MORE CLOSELY TO VIEWS OF CSU AND RIGHT-WING ELEMENTS OF CDU. STRAUSS MAY WELL ALSO FEEL THAT HE NOW HAS OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL CRIPPLING BLOW TO KOHL'S PRESTIGE AMONG POWER BROKERS IN CDU. CONGEN IS WELL AWARE THAT STRAUSS' RECENT PROPENSITY TO OVERPLAY HIS HAND COULD PRODUCE A BOMMERANG EFFECT. WE BELIEVE, NEVERTHELESS, THAT STRAUSS MAY BE IN POSITION AT JULY 6 MEETING OF JOINT CDU/CSU STRATEGY COMMISSION TO EXERT ENOUGH LEVERAGE ON KOHL TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR COMPROMISES IN OPPOSITION STRATEGY FAVORABLE TO CSU POSITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. STRAUSS APPEARS CONVENCED THAT KOHL HAS BEEN SHAKEN BY MAGNITUDE OF CRITICISM IN CDU/CSU RANKS RESULTING FROM DECISION OF LOWER SAXONY TO SUPPORT IN BUNDESRAAT THE COALITION'S MEASURES  
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TO CURB HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS. HE APPARENTLY ALSO BELIEVES THAT KOHL LOST SUPPORT AMONG MORE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS OF CDU WHEN HE SIDED WITH LEFT-WING ELEMENTS ON CDU PROGRAM FOR REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT.

3. ACCORDING TO INFORMED SOURCES HERE, STRAUSS FEELS THAT AT FIRST MEETING OF JOINT STRATEGY COMMISSION KOHL WILL BE

COMPELLED AT MINIMUM TO ADOPT OR AT LEAST MOVE CLOSER TO THE HARDER LINE TOWARD FDP WHICH STRAUSS AND CSU HAVE BEEN TAUTING SINCE BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS LAST OCTOBER. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT STRAUSS WILL BE SATISFIED TO STOP THERE. HE IS LIKELY INSTEAD TO PRESS FOR FORMULATION OF AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD STRATEGY DESIGNED TO PRESENT VOTERS WITH MORE CLEAR-CUT ALTERNATIVES TO SPD/FDP PROGRAMS. HE IS ALSO LIKELY TO CITE CDU'S RECENTLY DEVELOPED PROGRAM FOR REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT AS EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF "ME TOO-ISM" WHICH IS NOT ONLY CONTRARY TO CONCEPT OF MARKET ECONOMY BUT ALSO SERVES TO BLUR DISTINCTION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION IN EYES OF VOTERS.

4. CSU PARTY BOARD IS SCHEDULED TO HOLD CLOSED MTG IN OUT-OF-WAY TOWN OF AMBERG ON JULY 2. FIRST ITEM ON AGENDA IS TO BE REPORT BY STRAUSS ON POLITICAL SITUATION. ALTHOUGH CONGEN WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT RULE OUT COMPLETELY ANOTHER THUNDERBOLT A LA KREUTH, BELIEVE STRAUSS IS LIKELY TO USE THIS MEETING TO SEEK SUPPORT AND LEGITIMACY FOR POSITIONS HE AND OTHER CSU MEMBERS OF STRATEGY COMMISSION WILL ADOPT JULY 6. FACT THAT THERE IS TO BE NO REPEAT NO PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THIS MEETING GIVES IT AURA OF MYSTERY, HOWEVER.

5. CLEARER PICTURE OF STRAUSS' INTENTIONS REGARDING KOHL AND CDU SHOULD EMERGE WHEN NEXT ISSUE OF "SPIEGEL" APPEARS JULY 4. STRAUSS AIDE HAS TOLD CONGEN IN CONFIDENCE THAT SPIEGEL WILL CARRY TEXT OF RECENT INTERVIEW WITH STRAUSS WHICH IS HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

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CRITICAL OF KOHL. AIDE HINTED THAT CSU HEADQUARTERS WAS STILL DISCUSSING PUBLISHED VERSION OF THIS INTERVIEW WITH SPIEGEL MANAGEMENT JULY 1.  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, GE, CDU, (KOHL, HELMUT), (STRAUSS, FRANZ JOSEF)  
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